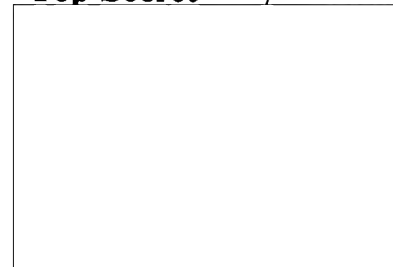




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Afghanistan Situation Report



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20 August 1985

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AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT

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SOVIETS ENGAGED IN MAJOR SWEEP OPERATIONS

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The Soviets are mounting a major sweep operation in Paktia Province.

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AFGHAN REFUGEES: A POTENTIAL HEADACHE

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Tension is increasing between Pakistani residents and Afghan refugees, who are being blamed for increases in rents, land prices, and crime.

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OPIUM HARVEST UP

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opium poppy production in Nangarhar Province has more than doubled since last year, increasing total production in Afghanistan this year to more than 300 tons.

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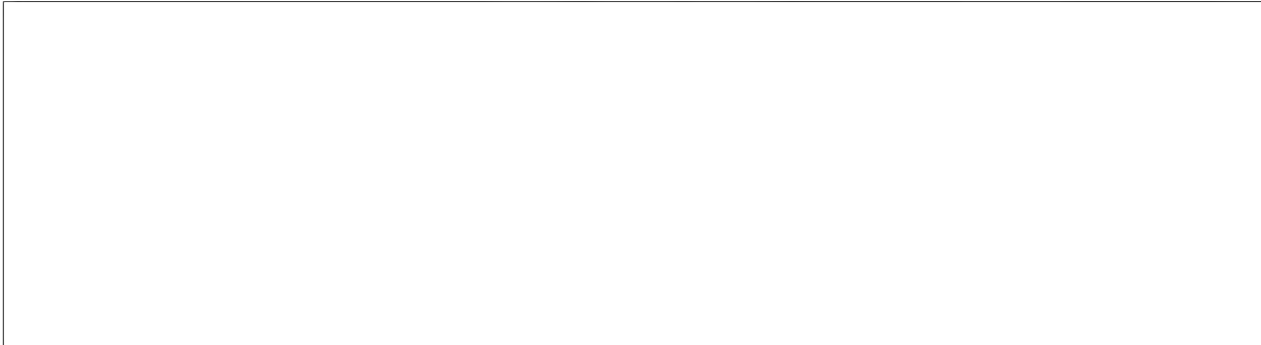
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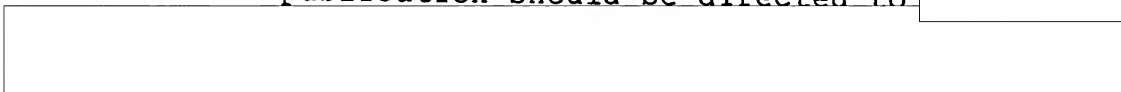
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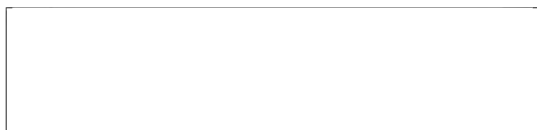
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SOVIETS ENGAGED IN MAJOR SWEEP OPERATION (S NF)

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[redacted] Soviets are mounting a major sweep operation in Paktia Province. [redacted]

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[redacted] A Soviet/Afghan air attack spilled over the Pakistani border on 19 August, killing eight and wounding 12 Pakistanis, according to US Embassy sources in Pakistan. Cross border shellings into Pakistan also occurred several times last week. [redacted]

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[redacted] a significant increase in military activity in the Gardeyz area with the arrival of a regiment-sized task force and the presence of 25 Hip and 15 Hind helicopters. [redacted]

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In other areas, resistance activity in Kabul declined last week because of a Soviet sweep outside the city and tighter security during the recently held local elections, according to US Embassy sources. Nevertheless, western Kabul city and the Darulaman complex were rocketed and insurgents destroyed or captured 50 vehicles in an attack on a military convoy south of the capital. Insurgent ambushes and attacks continue in Ghazni Province, according to US Embassy sources. [redacted]

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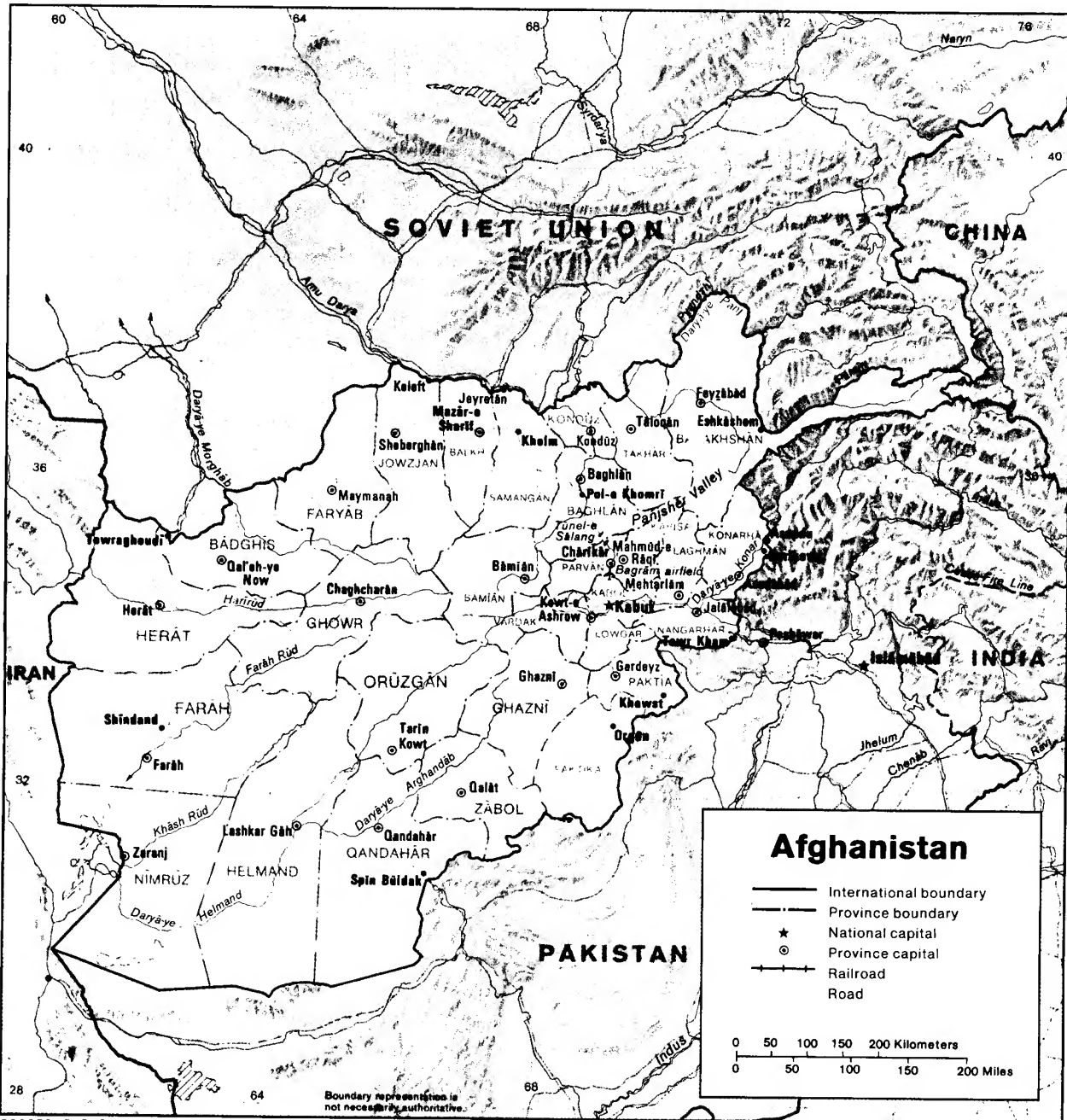
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Comment: Cultural barriers and a hostile population have hampered Soviet efforts to develop human sources of tactical intelligence since the conflict in Afghanistan began--forcing them to depend heavily on their unreliable Afghan partners. Even when the Afghan intelligence service (KHAD) obtains tactical intelligence on the location, equipment, command structure, and plans of insurgent groups, the Soviets have often failed to respond promptly to these reports.

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AFGHAN REFUGEES: A POTENTIAL HEADACHE

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Refugee migration to urban areas in Pakistan--combined with the substantial sums of money some of them bring--are causing sharp increases in urban rents and land prices, according to a variety of reports. Although migration has alleviated local labor shortages in the past, it is now creating labor surpluses that are depressing wages in some areas. Refugees are opening numerous small businesses, and in Quetta, Baluchistan, they dominate industries such as trucking, and sandal and shoe manufacturing.

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Comment: Relations between local residents and refugees are now good, but signs of strain are emerging in the cities, and overall relations may deteriorate if the economy declines. The press and government officials are already blaming Afghan refugees for 70 percent of all crime in Baluchistan. In addition, Afghans are being held responsible for declines in wages in some areas and are likely to be blamed, for example, for the increased unemployment caused in part by Pakistanis returning from the Middle East. Pakistanis will also probably resent the refugees as they become more visible in the economy.

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OPIUM HARVEST UP

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Opium poppy production in Nangarhar--Afghanistan's leading poppy-producing province--has more than doubled since last year to 200 metric tons,

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Last year the province accounted for more than half of Afghanistan's 160-metric-ton opium poppy crop.

Afghanistan's total opium crop this year will exceed 300 tons.

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Comment: The higher opium output is largely due to an increase in the area cultivated. Nangarhar's production alone--if it were all refined into heroin--would equal five times the average amount of heroin consumed in the United States in one year; Afghanistan's total production would exceed the amount of heroin consumed in Europe and the United States combined.

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IN BRIEF

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-- Insurgents shot down two MI-24 attack helicopters on 16 July near Jabal os Saraj at the mouth of the Panjsher, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] The same source reported that insurgents shot down an unidentified jet aircraft near Qandahar on 27 July. According to unconfirmed press reports, insurgents shot down another Soviet helicopter in Paktia Province on 5 August. [REDACTED]

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-- [REDACTED] manning levels for Afghan Army enlisted men stood at only 38 percent of authorized strength in early summer. For example, the Afghan garrison at Peshghowr, recently overrun by Masood's forces, totaled only 150 men and not the reported 400 to 600 troops [REDACTED]

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-- Regime media continue to play up elections to local councils, according to US Embassy sources in Kabul. The elections, which began on 10 August in Kabul, are continuing elsewhere in the country. Regime manipulation of the elections results was blatant, according to the report. [REDACTED]

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UPCOMING EVENTS

27 August The Fifth Round of indirect talks on Afghanistan between Pakistan and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan will begin in Geneva. [REDACTED]

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